

## THE CAUSE OF WOMEN.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN AN ADVOCATE OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

Sixty-three years ago he wanted all who bore the burdens of Government to share its privileges and especially included women—Gen. Hille as a suffragist—Vice-President Johnson as a suffragist.

Gen. Irving Hall, said to be the youngest General in the army, had returned to his home in Denver, after more than a year's hard service in the Philippines. He took an active part in the successful effort to secure equal suffrage for the women of Colorado. A writer in the *Denver Daily News* recalls this fact, and says of him: "One of his distinguishing characteristics was an intense love of woman's fair play. This was illustrated when the suffrage campaign of '93 was on. He quietly entered the headquarters of the Colorado State Suffrage Association one day, over in the Opera House Block, and, quite unobtrusively, announced that he was ready to take whatever the committee wished to assign him for the cause in Denver and vicinity. He was a most efficient helper throughout the campaign."

"Patriotic Nugget," a little book, lately published, containing selections from the words of prominent American statesmen, includes a letter from Abraham Lincoln which will be a surprise to most readers. Few persons are aware that Lincoln publicly advocated woman suffrage sixty-three years ago, twelve years before the holding of the first woman's rights convention. His letter is dated from New Salem, Ill., June 13, 1836, and is worth quoting in full:

"In your issue of the 10th inst. I saw a communication under the signature of 'Many Voters.' In which the candidates who are announced in the *Journal* are called upon to 'show their hands.' Agreed. Here's mine.

"I go for allowing the privileges of the Government to all sharing the burdens, consequently for all admitting to white men the right of suffrage who pay taxes of bear arms, by no means excluding females.

"If elected, I shall consider the whole people of Sangamon my constituents, as well those that oppose as those that support me."

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

Three letters lately received from the West give the views of three women living, two in small villages, the other in a large city.

Mrs. Alice Randall, President of the New Century Club of Manzanilla, writes:

"My point of view may be of interest, as representing the conditions of the West, and its environs. At the election last fall, I heard of only two women who did not vote. I mean seem to be just as respectful and just as good husbands here as elsewhere. Political questions are often discussed in general society, and the opinion of the women seems to carry more weight than there is in the East. In local politics, equal suffrage certainly makes a difference. For instance, we had a very poor school last year, and this spring the politicians, who wanted to run the school 'cheap,' nominated the village blacksmith for school trustee, as he was willing to be 'shaped' by them. Had it not been for the women, he would have been elected instead of a college graduate of fine attainments."

"On election day, it was interesting to watch the line of farm wagons around the polls, in which were seated whole families out for a holiday. Either the father or one of the older children would hold the baby while the mother voted. The farmers' wives were a very small crowd. Several have told me that it had opened their minds to a broader outlook, and given them views beyond their daily toil. These farmers' wives have often had better educational advantages than their husbands. No one, I believe, regrets the privilege given her. In every community, the women have been the benefactors of good women will far outweigh the influence of the baser element."

Miss Minnie J. Reynolds, President of the Denver Women's Press Club, writes:

"You ask whether the bad and ignorant women vote more generally than good and intelligent. I suppose they do fall into two groups. Their vote is supposed to influence the result in two out of the fifteen districts of the city of Denver. They are not found in sufficient numbers in any other locality in the State to effect results. Aside from the fallen women, it would be difficult to separate any class of women as 'good' or 'ignorant.' Some of our best informed women are the wives of men in very humble circumstances, perhaps working men. They have turned to politics as the source of a new interest in their lives, and have been constantly informing themselves in that way. They have obtained the ballot. Among the leisure class, the women are generally more interested in politics than the men. "Equal suffrage has most decidedly not increased corruption in politics. I believe that any impartial and well informed observer would admit that political conditions have been better and cleaner during the present and the last administration in Colorado than under the administration of any other Governor. It is generally true in politics that women are cleaner than men, or the one immediately following, when they were perfectly ignorant and untried. Any person who should suggest that equal suffrage impaired the happiness of the home in this State would be laughed at."

"It has not altered the social position of women in any way, and it has increased rather than lessened their influence for good. All sorts of public officials pay more attention to their requests. For instance, the other day at a meeting of the City Improvement Society, a woman stated that pictures of an unsuitable nature were being displayed with the city cards at the city card society. The society immediately took action, and a letter of protest was sent to the City Hall. The same night the objectionable pictures were removed. As to the treatment of women, I have lived in Vermont, New York, New Jersey and Michigan, and in none of these States do women occupy a position of such respect and consideration as in this country. In the women's world, from the little things like giving them a seat in the street cars, to big ones like equal pay for equal work."

"I can see absolutely no bad results from equal suffrage in Colorado. The good results are mainly indirect, and it may be difficult at times for a person who has not watched the whole course of the movement from the beginning, to define them. But no one who knew Denver women intimately, both before and since their exercise of the suffrage, can doubt that the possession of the ballot has very largely increased their interest in public affairs, and their efforts to study and understand the conditions of the State. They have been informed to-day, and have far more definite opinions on all public questions relating to city, State and nation, and also on economic questions, than they had six years ago. Any one who studies political affairs, and takes an active part in them, however small, comes to know in time that reform can never be effected suddenly, or even speedily. Reform depends entirely on the education of the whole mass of voters, until a majority of them the standard of opinion has been so elevated that things which were once countenanced and permitted will no longer receive this acquiescence. I believe it was not until the women of this country, in the early days of their participation in politics, which so discouraged some of them that they felt as if they never wished to have anything to do with politics again. But to the more careful observer the fact that laying the responsibility of the suffrage upon women was a most judicious move, for the information upon the subject, in a sufficient compensation to the State for the extension of the privilege; because the careful observer learns that only by the slow process of educating the whole people will better conditions in politics and government ever prevail. And those who realize the vast influence which this discovery has won in the school, the church, and society in general, will perceive that it is an immense gain to the State if this is an intelligent and educated influence. It is simply the old question of an educated and enlightened citizenry."

"It may be objected that women can inform themselves and exercise an influence without possessing the ballot. That is true abstractly, but the fact remains that they did not do it in Colorado until they were given the suffrage. I think exceptional women will

study economic questions everywhere, in these days when such questions are so much in the public mind. But the masses of the women will not do so unless they feel a sort of responsibility in that line. Moreover, it is certainly true that the opinions of women on these matters have more influence since the woman is a voter. The very fact that, whether in politics or in the street, she can go to the polls and back up her opinion with a vote, has an influence upon her listener.

"A marked example of the effect of the bestowal of suffrage may be found in Mrs. A. J. Welch, the recently elected President of the Colorado Equal Suffrage Association. Mrs. Welch has long been one of the social and intellectual leaders of Denver. Prominent in club circles, her home was also the center of a gracious hospitality. Like many women of this class, she was opposed to the extension of the suffrage, and while she took no active stand against it, she did nothing to help it. She was openly proclaimed herself a convert, on the sole ground of the good it had done the women of Colorado in broadening and educating them. To the astonishment of many of her old friends, she accepted last Spring the presidency of the Suffrage Association, and at her own expense attended the National Convention at Grand Rapids."

Miss Rosella Moore, President of the Nineteenth Century Club of Provo City, Utah, writes: "As I am not a member of the dominant church, which largely controls politics in Utah, and have not taken an active part in the political conventions, my answers to your questions will be based entirely on observation."

"I do not think that equal suffrage in Utah is any different from what it is in other States, and the idea that it has increased political corruption is absurd. As a rule, the good and intelligent women take far more interest in the questions of the day than the bad and ignorant."

"Present I can only say that I have seen equal suffrage. Among the good results, I might mention that it has given women a better opportunity as wage-earners. In almost every county some women are office-holders, and I believe perform their duties equally well with men. It certainly has stimulated women to a more intelligent study of the questions of the day, and a deeper sense of the responsibilities incumbent upon the citizens of this Republic. No doubt there are some women who take an active part in politics and neglect the higher duties of home; but I have noticed that those women showed the same indifference to husband and children as the men, and that they were not, and it is hardly just to give that as a cause."

"I am not a woman suffragist in the common acceptance of the term, but I recognize the prominent part that women are taking in the furtherance of many reforms which are much needed, and it gives me pleasure to correct any erroneous impressions that may have gone out."

By a unanimous vote, the Sioux County (Iowa) Republican Convention at Hull resolved that the question of woman suffrage ought to be submitted to the voters. In Iowa, as in New York, opponents of the cause of the women have been the voters from being given a chance to pass upon it.

Queen Victoria affixed her signature to 50,000 public documents during the last twelve months. Yet some people think that an active American woman could not do more in a year.

ALICE STONE BLACKWELL.

DORCHESTER, MASS.

THE OIL SMELLER.

A User of the Divining Rod Who Does Business in West Virginia.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—Sir: In the *Sun* of Sept. 14 appeared an article from the *Sketch*, of London, entitled "The Divining Rod Man." England is not alone in possessing diviners, for the United States has its diviners, too. The writer has met two, and one only last week. This diviner possessed the power of locating oil, and as oil is found at a depth of from 500 to 2,500 feet, our American diviners travel head and shoulders above the Britisher. It may be of some interest to state my experience with one of these diviners, and how he was known in the oil country as an oil smeller.

Several gentlemen, producers of oil in the State of West Virginia, and myself had heard of the powers of this man, and having under lease a farm of several hundred acres, it was suggested that the oil smeller be summoned to give a demonstration of his magic, and tell us where the oil was on the farm. An appointment was made. The oil smeller was sent a day ahead in order to make his explorations alone. We met him the following morning, and started out under his guidance to walk over the farm and see the spots where the oil was, and we would positively get oil. We followed him a few hundred yards, when he pulled out of his back pocket his divining rod, the same one which he always uses. It was enveloped in a white bag, at least once white. The rod was really two thin, flexible sticks of wood, each about thirty inches long, and as thick as lead. One end of each rod was rounded and a cube of wood, two inches wide by three inches broad by one inch thick, and when carrying the rod the diviner would hold one of the sticks in each hand at the extreme end and whenever a spot was found where there was oil, the rod would bend downward with the cube pointing toward the spot. The oil smeller would then say, "Here is a rich spot; here you will find oil in great quantities." Another place he would say was barren of oil, and at another place a small well would be found. He also could locate gas, but for this he used a piece of ordinary insulated copper wire. He likewise told us the depth at which we could find oil, what her at 500, 700, 900, 1,000 feet.

I asked the smeller to let me use the rod, but was informed that it would be ineffectual in my hands, as I did not possess the gifted power. He told me that he intended to have the rod patented, but, alas! he was the user, even his own sons could not use it, he being the only one of the family with the power. After spending several hours with the man, we asked him to show us the best spot on the farm, which he pointed out to us. We made what is called a location, and have decided to drill a well on this spot. As we are not geologists, we know, it may be of interest to your readers to know what we found, and I shall be most happy to inform them.

You ask me whether I believe in this man's mysterious art? Wait until I have completed the well.

THE WINDOW IN THE TENT.

An Old Soldier's Way of Securing Ventilation When in the Field.

"I never pulled down the window at the top to let in a little fresh air when I go to bed," said the old soldier, "without thinking of how we used to open the window in the tents in the army in war times. An A tent, seven feet square at the base and running up, wedge-shaped, to a ridge pole seven feet above the ground, gave us comfortable sleeping quarters for four men if you could leave the tent open, which was equivalent to leaving off the front of the house, but if it was cold or rainy, and the wind blew on the front of the tent so that you had to close it, why then you wanted ventilation somewhere, and you got it by making an opening in the side of the tent."

"There was a seam, overlapped, running down the middle of the back of the tent from the ridge pole to the ground, and we used to cut the stitches along that seam, up near the top of the tent, and spread the sides apart by putting in a stick six or eight inches across the middle, making there a diamond-shaped opening, about a foot long, which served the purpose admirably."

"The men's guns stood at that end of the tent, but resting on a piece of cracker box, the barrels held in some sort of a holder against the tent pole. If the wind changed on some rainy night and came around to blow against the back of the tent, the rain would come in on the guns and on us, and then somebody would get up and shut the window, that is take the stick out and let the canvas come together again there, and then open the tent a little at the other end, at the front."

"This all used to seem kind of strange, then, so that, though practically the same thing, I would have done in the old house at home and just what I'd do here now."

The Chamber is Very Much More Than a Place for Putting Your Hat or Coat.

That favorable for filling your Hat or Coat Boarding House with desirable patrons if you place your advertising in THE SUN's columns.—Ad.

## POEMS WORTH READING.

## The Voice of the Mountains.

From the *London Spectator*.

Crowned with the glory of the eternal snow,  
The high peaks of the mountains look down,  
The little race of man how should we know,  
Or the low levels of the world how soon?

Yet sometimes come the footsteps of the brave,  
Joy health, and fame we give them—or a grave,  
The good we welcome, but the evil we keep.

H. PAUL NEUMAN.

## He Stopped to Conquer.

From the *Chicago Times-Herald*.

He stopped and picked a ha-ha-thicket  
From the floor near where the stool stood,  
And, bowing, said, "Permit me," in  
The bravest, courtliest way he could.

The maiden blushed and sweetly said:  
"It is not mine," he knew "was not"  
The little race of man how should we know,  
Or the low levels of the world how soon?

Was one that he himself had bought.  
But there they stood and wondered who  
Might be its owner, and before  
The dainty thing he offered her.

What he had found upon the floor.  
The lady walked in her gown,  
One secret still in his breast.

S. B. KANA.

## My Dog.

From *Punch*.

Heard this lull, that formerly he pressed  
His head against a dog's head and said:  
"Him, as he sleeps, no well-known sound shall stir.  
The rabbit's pater or the peasant's whirr."

That speaks the startled partridge down the wind:  
The whistle of the wind, the whirr of the wheel,  
The double cluck of every lifted wing,  
The rattling of the rattle, the rattle of the wheel.

These sounds, which to his listening ears were dear,  
He heard no longer, for he cannot hear.  
None stancher, till the drive was done, defied  
Temptation, took to his master's side.

Leapt forth to track the wounded running bird,  
And, when the bird was dead, he lay down,  
His head against his master's side, and said:  
"Him, as he sleeps, no well-known sound shall stir."

Wagging a glad tail and deemed himself repaid.  
For while his master's hand he held he said:  
"I, while a word of praise was said, said  
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The rabbit's pater or the peasant's whirr."

That speaks the startled partridge down the wind:  
The whistle of the wind, the whirr of the wheel,  
The double cluck of every lifted wing,  
The rattling of the rattle, the rattle of the wheel.

These sounds, which to his listening ears were dear,  
He heard no longer, for he cannot hear.  
None stancher, till the drive was done, defied  
Temptation, took to his master's side